

# THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

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## Notes of Recent Exposition.

THERE has been published this month a book intended for ministers, more especially for ministers of the Anglican Communion, and primarily for the newly ordained. But ministers of any Communion might turn to it with profit. It is a composite work, edited by the Rev. Hubert S. Box, B.D., Ph.D., and is entitled *The Priest as Student* (S.P.C.K.; 8s. 6d. net).

Help and guidance are here given on the study of philosophy, sociology, and literature, as well as on the study of subjects coming within the ambit proper of theology: Old Testament, New Testament, The Fathers; Dogmatic Theology, Moral Theology, Spiritual Theology; Canon Law; Church History, Liturgiology. One of the most attractive and useful of the chapters is by the Rev. S. L. BROWN, D.D., who writes on the Study of the Old Testament.

Why should the 'priest,' asks this writer, devote more time to the study of the Old Testament than he is in the habit of doing? His answer is that the Old Testament is necessary to a complete understanding of the New; that it was the Bible both of Jesus Our Lord and of His apostles; that it is a storehouse of biography, anecdote, and illustration; that it shows the foundations upon which the Christian Faith is built; and that it contains a special message for us at the present day.

These points are all well made. We might notice  
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the last point in some detail. The reason why it may be said that the Old Testament has a special message for our times is that, as the late Professor J. E. McFadyen pointed out, it belongs to a world more like our own than that of the Apostolic Age.

It is near to us in its social, economic, and political problems (as witness the Prophets); in its occasional moods of doubt and scepticism (think of Job, Ecclesiastes, and some of the Psalms); in its background of war (a thousand years' war, from Moses to the Maccabees); and in its emphasis upon nationality (though its highest teaching, as in Ruth, Jonah, and passages from Psalmist and Prophet, transcends a narrow nationalism). For example, we mistake the meaning and purpose of Ruth if we fail to recognize that it is a protest against the attempts made by Nehemiah and Ezra to enforce what Hitler and Mussolini would call racial purity.

Dr. S. L. BROWN adds another reason why we should not neglect the Old Testament: its intrinsic interest as a field of study. The new light—linguistic, internal, and external—which has been received through modern criticism and research has taught us more about the human element in the Bible, and this in its turn serves to bring home to us more clearly the reality and nature of the divine element.

First, we know more about Arabic and Aramaic

than did those who gave us our Revised Version fifty years ago; and we have to note the comparatively recent discovery and decipherment of Egyptian, Accadian, and Hittite,—all of which languages illuminate the pages of the old Testament.

Again, the new critical (literary and historical) knowledge has added enormously to the interest of the Old Testament. Passages have been restored to their original setting. Ancient difficulties have been removed. Indeed the Old Testament has been given back to us with its message made clearer.

Yet again, new light upon the Old Testament comes from the 'external' (as distinguished from the 'internal') material which modern criticism and research have supplied. This material comes from the more or less contemporary records of ancient monuments, tablets, and papyri; from the archaeological evidence of excavations; from geographical research, folklore, psychology, and the comparative study of religious beliefs and customs.

But, to quote S. A. Cook, 'It is only when we seem to have deprived the Old Testament of all that was once thought to be peculiar to it that we discover how much more brightly its distinctiveness shines forth.'

There are changes of fashion in theological thought as in other things. Certain aspects of truth take possession of Christian minds, are hailed perhaps at first as a new revelation, hold the field for a time, and then, being seen to be inadequate, fall again into the background.

The present generation has witnessed notable changes of that sort. Many can recall the enthusiasm with which the Social Gospel was preached and received. Books like those of Peabody in England and Walter Rauschenbusch in America were found to be fresh and strangely fascinating. They inspired many ardent young minds with new possibilities of Christian service. They seemed to make the Kingdom of God so attractive and

humanly realizable. This gave rise to a spirit of what Continental theologians called activism which was specially prevalent in America. When American and Continental churchmen met in œcumenical conference they could hardly understand each others' language regarding the Kingdom of God. The energetic Westerners spoke as if the Kingdom were almost synonymous with social reform and could be brought in by human effort much as men carry through a political programme, all of which seemed to minds trained in another school to be presumptuous and forgetful of the fact that the Kingdom is of God through the gift of His grace.

A change of fashion in theological thought came with the rise of the eschatological school, led by Albert Schweitzer. It emphasized those elements in the gospel which speak of the Kingdom as supernatural in its origin and essence, something which man cannot achieve but can only wait and pray for, because it comes only in God's good time and by the power of His grace alone. More recently the Barthian theology has set currents of thought moving in the same direction with the stress it lays upon the sovereignty of God and His impact upon the world from above.

This change in theological thought has no doubt been greatly intensified by the cruel disillusionment which has fallen upon our age. It is manifest to every thoughtful mind to-day that the confident optimism of the nineteenth century has suffered a complete eclipse. The pœans in praise of human progress are silent, the upward progress is stayed and the nations are floundering ever deeper in the bog. The optimists are forced to the admission that there is a malady in human nature deeper than they had realized, and that if human society is to be redeemed it must be by some diviner power than man's.

The situation, then, in which we find ourselves to-day calls for a restatement of the doctrine of the Kingdom of God which will do fuller justice to the many-sided teaching of the Gospels. Activism has proved to be a broken reed, for the outbreak of evil in the world has gone far beyond human

control. On the other hand, an exclusive emphasis on the eschatological point of view leads inevitably to quietism and a cessation of all real effort for social betterment. Can we find in Jesus' teaching about the Kingdom of God an evangel of hope for this tragic time in which we live? What did Jesus mean by the phrase? Is it social or individual in its implications? 'The kingdom implies a king and a reign. Does it mean God's reign in the hearts of individuals or in the institutions of society? Has it a temporal reference, or does it anticipate something beyond time? Did Jesus think it would take place in history, or only beyond history? And how is it to be ushered in—by human effort or by divine power? Is it to be an evolution or an Apocalypse?' \_\_\_\_\_

These are some of the issues discussed in a book published by the Cokesbury Press in their series of 'good books.' Its title is *The Evangel of a New World*, by the Rev. Dr. Albert Edward DAY (Cokesbury Press; \$1.50). The writer does not enter into minute details of exegesis which would require a much larger work, but he is a sound interpreter of gospel teaching, and his applications of that teaching to modern conditions are very suggestive and helpful. \_\_\_\_\_

Jesus clearly believed in a Kingdom of God beyond time and history. This seems 'the inevitable deduction from His own assumption of the title Son of Man, who in the apocalyptic tradition was a suprahistorical figure who came down from heaven to inaugurate a heavenly society.' He said at the Eucharist meal, 'I will not drink of the fruit of the vine till the Kingdom of God shall come,' and in that Kingdom He envisaged a condition of life in which they 'neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels in heaven.' \_\_\_\_\_

Moreover, Jesus believed that the Kingdom beyond time and history would come by God's power. Parable after parable makes explicit and emphatic that belief—the seed growing secretly, the marriage supper, the hid treasure, all speak of something divinely given. The comparison of the coming of the Son of Man to the lightning flashing

from east to west indicates no gradual evolution of the worse into the better but a transformation so swift as to be almost instantaneous. At the same time He held that the Kingdom had already come in His own life and work. This is clearly expressed in all His teaching. And, further, this Kingdom present in His life and work was the result of God's self-manifestation through Him. It was 'with the finger of God' that He cast out devils and did His wondrous works. \_\_\_\_\_

'Can we bring these different strands of belief into an ordered and consistent whole? I do not think we can unless in some such fashion as this. The Kingdom of God as Jesus conceived it is a suprasensible, suprahistorical reality which invaded history in His own person, accounting for His life and death and triumph over death. But the historical order cannot contain the whole meaning of the Kingdom. Its consummation must come when God, standing athwart the years, brings time to an end, and inaugurates the—to us—unimaginable régime of eternity. The Kingdom of God is that splendour which emerged in Jesus and to which His disciples awoke after Jesus' death, when, their eyes being partly opened, they saw and knew what they had seen, but had not seen in Him and through Him, when as Jesus prophesied they drank the new wine of the Kingdom.' \_\_\_\_\_

What does all this mean for us and for our hopes of social betterment? Does it negate the conception of social progress and condemn all our crusades as the hot haste of little men? Or, on the other hand, does it offer us a corrective of our dreams and a discipline for our endeavours? Surely the latter if it be rightly understood. \_\_\_\_\_

Briefly it gives us, for one thing, 'a sound and invigorating philosophy of reality.' Where is Ultimate Reality or God? Inside or outside the time-process? If the answer be wholly outside, then all the struggle within the time-process is hopeless, for there is no power available to lift man up. Likewise if the answer be wholly inside, the struggle is equally hopeless, for God is nothing more than the process itself. But in the concept

of the Kingdom we have a transcendent God who is immanent in Jesus Christ. 'God is in the process as its sustaining, vital element. God is beyond the process as its flying goal. The God beyond the process is ever breaking into the process, lifting it to higher levels, creating new forms into which He pours new life, making it more and more a hint and revelation of what He is, and therefore more and more a source of satisfaction to us who, also within the process, have set within our hearts hungers which the process can never satisfy, but which can be appeased only by what He is.'

It gives us also the principle of right procedure. 'We cannot bring in the Kingdom of God any more than we can bring in some Utopia. We do not have to bring it in. God must and God will in His own time.' Our only hope is an infusion of the eternal, a breath from heaven, a transforming touch of the ideal. But this does not condemn us to quietism. What we *can* do, and what we have the responsibility of doing, is to let the Kingdom in its saving power have a chance at *us*. It must begin there. 'To us comes an old call with a new meaning—Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand. Such repentance involves so drastic an overhauling of ourselves and our human relations that . . . if only they who are called Christians repented, many of the glaring wrongs of the world would be righted. The Kingdom of God cannot visit us until we repent, and repentance is a man's sized job for any man. If every Christian doorway were clear, the debris which makes hideous and pestilential much of our communal life would already be on the way out. We are in no position to do anything about other social dirt until we get rid of our own private uncleanness.'

And when our hearts become a part of the Kingdom of God we shall see society with new eyes. In tackling the practical problems of our time we shall have a standard of judgment and procedure. It will be this—access to the Kingdom of God. 'Anything which blocks men's way to the Kingdom is under condemnation. Anything which keeps the way open is not perfect, to be sure, but may be the best that can be expected in human situations.'

It is for the sons of the Kingdom wisely to apply this principle of judgment and strive to clear out of men's path everything that hinders its coming.

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Those who have read that theological thriller 'Who Moved the Stone?' by Mr. Frank MORISON will be eager to read his new book: *And Pilate Said . . .* It professes to be, and is, 'a new study of the Roman Procurator.' In that aspect alone it is both interesting and important, and sets the famous Roman in a more favourable light than the traditional portrait. But the book is far more than a study of Pilate. It is a re-reading of the gospel story, particularly of the story of the post-Crucifixion phenomena. And in that matter it is of special value.

To begin with, the author draws attention to a fact which has impressed him profoundly, the very curious emphasis which all the documents place upon these phenomena. It is entirely different from what you would expect. Here is a great Teacher arrested and condemned. His followers flee, reassemble later and pledge themselves to carry on the work which He had begun. The rest is history, and the ever-growing dominance of the Christian Church. Now what would you expect on these historical postulates?

You would surely expect to find this nucleus of a new and growing movement going about the world with a message which laid primary emphasis upon the *content of the Teaching*. 'Here, they would say, is a great and profoundly good man with a new and vivid gospel for the bewildered sons of men. He was wickedly cut off in the very zenith of his powers. But his message still lives, and we will devote our lives to carrying it to the ends of the world.' Actually we find nothing of the kind.

We find that the *primary* interest is not so much what Jesus *said as who He was*. And at the heart of all this contemporary writing is the confident assertion, as though the fact could not seriously be challenged, that God had raised this man from

the dead. Yet, about thirty years after the Crucifixion, when all the initial excitement had died down, and the earliest written records begin to appear, the teaching emerges slowly, as we know it must. It is like a submerged volcanic island rising by progressive stages from the sea. The higher peaks and the more vivid parables come out first in St. Mark. Then a vaster plateau emerges in the twin Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Luke, depending largely on contemporary notes and recollections of the more arresting sayings. Finally the picture is completed in St. John.

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Two broad facts emerge from all this. One is that the historic figure whom we call Jesus of Nazareth was of a *stature commensurate with the dislodgement of events* produced by His history. The other is that, in all human probability, we should never have heard of this teaching of Jesus at all had it not been for the post-Crucifixion experiences. This stands out of the historic picture. Who would have troubled to report the teaching had not something far more challenging to the thought and belief of the ancient world been carried by eager and excited men to the confines of the Roman Empire? It is clear that the post-Crucifixion phenomena were the spearhead of the Christian movement in earliest times. It was this that 'saved' the teaching and secured its historical and literary permanence.

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We are forced, therefore, to inquire how it was that the followers of Jesus, and the immense numbers of new converts who rallied to their cause, came to be so undeniably convinced of the survival of Jesus. Here we have three logical alternatives. The first is the hypothesis of the Twin-Brother. This is sponsored by Dr. Robert Eisler in his notable book, 'The Messiah Jesus and John the Baptist.' It was a twin-brother of Jesus that the women saw, and their fleeting glances at him started the rumour of the Resurrection. With all respect to Mr. MORISON, it does not seem necessary to delay on this wild and fantastic theory.

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The second hypothesis is that of hallucination. It had a considerable vogue forty years ago, but

it is generally recognized to-day as failing to satisfy historical conditions. It presupposes a state of mind in the disciples favourable to the production of a phantom of their dead leader. And it breaks down completely in the face of the experience of St. Paul. Here was a man definitely *hostile* to the teaching of the Apostles. Yet it is this man, with his brilliant intellectual equipment, who came over—lock, stock and barrel—to its support. It is impossible to exaggerate the historical significance of this very remarkable fact.

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We are brought, therefore, face to face with the ultimate question: What *will* satisfy all the known conditions of this complex historical problem? At this point Mr. MORISON stops to define a word which unavoidably appears in this connexion, the word 'supernormal.' There is a growing body of phenomena in experience concerning which we have as yet insufficient data and upon which an ultimate judgment must of necessity be deferred. Among these the 'appearances' of Christ are a classical example. It is illogical to deny them, because, if they are totally eliminated from the historic field, the history of the first century yields only an intellectual chaos.

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Even so convinced a modernist as Kirsopp Lake recognizes this. He argues that a purely subjective explanation of the appearances does not satisfy the historical conditions, and supports the theory that the phenomena had an objective stimulus, 'the manifestation of a surviving personality,' to use his own words. We do not yet know how so vivid and intense a consciousness of a visible and audible presence was produced in the minds of the recipients. We only know that the evidence for it in the Gospels is exceptionally strong, and behind that great witness is the earlier and authentic voice of Paul calling to us in that ringing passage from the first letter to the Corinthians (chapter fifteen).

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Mr. MORISON then goes on to emphasize the fact that *an empty tomb* was associated with the Christian story from the very first morning. All the documents agree that the women who went to the tomb

were prevented from performing the last rites. They 'found not' the body of Jesus. He stresses the point that the thought of a vacant grave was not an inference from the appearances. Its association with the story is as old as Christianity itself. And in a very convincing passage he argues that the place of interment was perfectly well known, and, since the Christians were gaining many converts by their confident assertion of the Resurrection, all the authorities needed to do was to point out the sealed tomb and show that it was intact.

And so we reach two conclusions. One is that the 'appearances' of Jesus, as described in the Gospels, seem to indicate the manifestation of psycho-physical phenomena of a very unusual kind, and must therefore be placed provisionally in the category already referred to, *i.e.* of events concerning which we have as yet insufficient scientific or experimental data. And, second, the suggestion that the Christian campaign in Jerusalem, prior to the first Persecution, was (or could have been) conducted consciously in the physical presence

of the remains of Jesus, lying by the mutual consent of both sides within three minutes' walk of the Gennath Gate, raises logical stresses of a very grave order—a sort of deformation of history. Historically we can carry the investigation no further. We can only wait that fuller light which time, and our growing knowledge of this strange universe, will assuredly shed upon it.

Mr. MORISON has an unusually balanced and scientific cast of mind. His conclusions are stated with cautious reserve. "Those which we have summarized are contained in a postscript to his book, written in his hotel in Jerusalem the night before he left for home. As he sat and reflected on his own investigations and on the scenes they recalled, his conviction of the reliability of the gospel story came upon him with renewed force. There are things in that story that are 'supernormal,' and so far not fully intelligible, but of the supreme fact which is central to the Christian gospel, and of the solid evidence for it, the author, on grounds which we have briefly indicated, is perfectly assured.

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## Recent Biblical Archaeology.

BY THE REVEREND J. W. JACK, D.D., GLENFARG, PERTSHIRE.

THE view put forward before the 'Académie des Inscriptions' by the Abbé Hennequin, and mentioned in our June article, that there was no evidence of animal sacrifices in the temple at Lachish, but only of cereal and perfume offerings, has now been found to be incorrect. Thanks to Sir Charles Marston, quantities of bones which were found around the altar and in the rubbish pits, and which on account of their small size seem to have been regarded at the time as those of fowls, have been examined by Professor D. M. S. Watson, of the Department of Zoology in University College, London, and turn out to be mostly those of lambs (or goats) with a few of oxen and of two wild beasts (such as gazelle or ibex). He draws attention to two remarkable features. One is that the animals were all young, and the other that practically all the identifiable bones are meta-

carpels of the right fore-leg. There were three successive temples at Lachish, all on the same site (in the Hyksos fosse surrounding the city), the earliest dating from about 1550 B.C., and the latest being still in existence, it is known, about 1250 B.C., and the bones are stated by Mr. Charles Inge (who assisted the late Mr. J. L. Starkey) to have come from all three structures. The discovery leads to some interesting conclusions. For one thing, the offering, it should be noted, is in accordance with the ritual described in Lv 7<sup>32-34</sup> and elsewhere, according to which the victims had to be young (a lamb, kid, calf, etc., 'of the first year'), and the right leg, probably the fore-leg, was dedicated to Yahweh as a 'contribution' or 'selected portion' (*terûma*, wrongly translated 'heave-offering' in many places both in A.V. and R.V.), but at the same time was reserved for the priests, who no doubt